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FOLK-LORE

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A QUARTERLY REVIEW

OF

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[LXXVI.]

[title page]

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000 wrapped up in paper, and told me it was for a sick person, who mixed it in water and drank it for a remedy. He said that this was Father Peter's grave, and that he had been a very holy man.

(*To be continued.*)

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539 FOLK TALES FROM THE TONGA ISLANDS.

Muni of the Torn-Eye.

There was once in Tongatabu a great chief, called Motuku Veevalu, who was king of Hihifo, whilst his rival, Bunga Lotohoa (or Lotolava), was king of Hahake. In course of time these two champions met in combat, with the result that Motuku was worsted, and fled and lived in concealment. His rival Bunga then reigned as sole king of Tongatabu. But one day the wife of the discomfited Motuku, smitten with the desire to travel and see distant lands, stowed herself on board a double canoe which was making ready to carry a boat-building party to some other island. All went well until they reached the reef in Haapai called the Fahas, but there the little party, delayed by bad weather, and unprepared to keep so long at sea, soon began to experience the pangs of hunger. Then, seeking a cause for their misfortunes, they discovered the hapless wife of Motuku in the leeward canoe. Dragging the woman out, they cut her open, and, finding her pregnant, flung the babe into the sea. The child thus rudely born drifted far, and was at last cast ashore, still living, at Lofanga, one of the Haapai islands. The luckless infant's woes were not yet over, for, lying there on the surface of a rock, he was assailed by a snipe, which picked out one of his eyes and sadly disfigured his visage. His cries, however, attracted to the spot a man and his wife who had gone down to the sea to fish. They took compassion on the little sea-waif, and determined to adopt him, for they were childless and had ever longed for a babe. So the child was nurtured by these foster-parents, who gave him the name of Muni. As the lad grew up he developed a most extraordinary strength, so that the people of Lofanga both envied and feared him, and at

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last fell to devising plans to rid themselves of him. Accordingly, when in course of time orders were given for the people to build a boat house, the full half of the work was allotted to the foster-parents of Muni. Deep was their dismay at the magnitude of the task assigned them. They despaired of its accomplishment, and deemed their expulsion from the island inevitable. Muni meanwhile was sleeping—proneness to sleep was a fault of his—in entire oblivion of the tears and lamentations of his parents. But waking anon, and learning of their distress, he assured them, bidding them leave the labour to him. Accordingly, on the morrow he repaired to the bush, and tearing up a great cocoa-nut tree and other trees for the posts of the boat house, he bore all off to the site of the building, and in the twinkling of an eye had completed the assigned half. 539

So far was this prodigy of strength and skill from securing immunity to Muni and his foster-parents that the anger and resentment of the people but blazed the fiercer, and at length so great was the couple's fear at this growing disfavour that they themselves determined to be rid of a charge so troublesome. In pursuance of a plan they had formed, they took Muni with them on a fishing expedition to the island of Meama. There, leaving Muni in charge of the boat, they went off, ostensibly to fish, but soon returning they found, as they fully expected, Muni fast asleep in the bottom of the boat. They quickly removed the steering-gear, bale, and all the outfit, set the boat adrift, and returned themselves to Lofanga. So Muni, still sleeping, was borne far out to sea, and would assuredly have perished had not a fragment of a bowl been left in the canoe. The boat was filling, but this fragment set afloat by the incoming water, and knocking against the side, awakened the sleeper, and discovered to him his peril. Luckily the high cone of Kao was not quite out of sight. With one mighty scoop Muni baled the water from the windward canoe. Then leaping to the leeward canoe he cleared it with the same speed. Wrenching a pole from the lashings between the two canoes, he set to work with this rude paddle to cover the long distance back to Lofanga. Night had fallen before the journey was accomplished. Going ashore he went home, but did not at once enter the house. As he stood outside leaning against a plantain tree, he overheard

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539 his foster-parents conversing within the house, and presently gathered that they were congratulating themselves on being rid of him, for, as they said, they had been in danger of perishing for the sake of one of whose very parentage they were ignorant. Then, for the first time aware that these were not his parents, Muni made his way into the house, demanding that they tell him who is his father, that he may go and seek him. In reply he was told that his father lived in Tongatabu, whither he must go, landing at Telio in Hihifo. There a bird will meet him, and running before him lead the way to his father.

Muni at once set out, accompanied only by a Fijian attendant to whom he was greatly attached. Arrived at Telio he bade the Fijian jump ashore and fix the stake to which to fasten the boat. After many vain efforts (of which the mark remains to this day), the Fijian called out that he could not drive in the stake as he was on rock. Thereupon Muni jumped ashore, and with one great stroke of the stake drove it so deep that the hole has never been fathomed. Going up to the land he saw, as predicted, a bird, which, running before him, led at last to a bower formed of a creeping gourd plant. Putting aside the leaves, he found concealed within a man whose face was almost hidden by a huge beard. The bearded man was none other than Motuku, but naturally enough he did not at once recognise his son. Muni, however, claimed him as his parent, and on recalling the circumstances of his birth, Motuku was convinced of the reality of the relationship, and they spent some time in affectionate embraces and converse. At length Muni bade his father call together their friends and relatives, whilst he himself took a stroll. Motuku would have negatived these plans, telling Muni also that he must speak softly as he was in hiding from his ancient enemy, Bunga. But Muni cried aloud, "Arise and call our people together, whilst I go and seek a man to fight with." The man whom he sought was Bunga. Now Bunga lived at Boha, where he dwelt in a great enclosure with his wives. There was also a huge kava plant, and a place where the flying-foxes roosted, among them a white flying-fox, by means of which he was able to divine. When Muni arrived at Boha, Bunga was away at Halakalakala, fishing for atu. Muni knocked at the house door, and a

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girl came to see who was there, supposing that perhaps her master had returned from his fishing. But on seeing a stranger with a disfigured face, she exclaimed, "Eh, Torn-eye, where do you come from?" But he only replied by bidding her open the door. "Get out of here as fast as you can, Torn-eye," responded the girl; "don't you know that this is Bunga's home?" "Yes," replied Muni, "I know that it is Bunga's home, but you open the door before I pull it down." Then the wives from within shouted abuse at him, bidding Torn-eye make off as fast as he could. Thereupon Muni, wrenching open the door, went in and humbled all the wives. Coming out again he plucked up the kava plant with one hand—the hole where it stood is still visible in Boha. Then, as he went off, he bade the women tell Bunga on his return to pursue him and avenge the insult in combat. 539

Now, when the kava plant was torn up, the flying-foxes set up a clamour which the distant Bunga noted as a warning that an intruder had entered his home, but seeing the white flying-fox coming to him he determined to put the matter to the test and know the certainty. Long bamboo rods are used in the atu fishing, and Bunga determined that according to the kind of rod on which the flying-fox alighted would he know whether things were well or ill at home. On came the flying-fox, alighting at once on a rod that, according to the predetermined sign, meant that intruders had broken in. The indignant Bunga lost no time, but ordered in the fishing tackle, and the rowers made their best speed to shore. There the angry chief soon learned from the weeping women that they had been insulted and the kava rooted up. Asking where the kava then was, he was told that it had been carried off, and he at once set out in pursuit. It happened that Bunga overtook Muni just as he had torn the huge plant in two and shaken the earth out from the roots, holding one half out on either side of him. The earth shaken out from these giant roots can be seen to-day, forming two little hills, one on either side of the road at Holonga. Before they closed, Bunga inquired how they should fight. "Oh, any way," carelessly replied Muni, "with arms, or boxing or wrestling." Then they wrestled. At the first onset Bunga threw Muni, but he was on his feet again in a twinkling, and seized Bunga in a terrible grasp, in which he was

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539 helpless as a child. He lifted him, but before he could dash him down Bunga had yielded, and, suspended aloft, was imploring mercy. "You shall be king Muni, but I shall be merely Bunga." So he let him down without throwing him. Thus it is that the coral is soft, and the coral rat weak. (Bunga in Tongan means coral.)

So the years sped by, and Muni dwelt on in Tongatabu, till at last he determined to take his Fijian henchman to revisit his friends at Ono. At the time of their arrival at Ono the land was ravaged by a great dog. Muni proposed that the Fijian go and visit his friends, whilst he himself would lie in the boat and await his return. But scarcely had the unfortunate Fijian started in from the beach when the huge dog sprang out and slew him, bearing the body away to his lair, where he ate it. Muni, all unconscious of this tragedy, waited long in the boat, but at last, uneasy at the non-appearance of his old companion, he set out to seek him. Following the Fijian's footprints he was led to a spot stained with blood. Thence following the footprints of the beast, he came at last to its den. He stood, and called his old friend. No voice replied, instead the ravening monster bounding out leaped at him. Undaunted, Muni seized its jaws and rent them asunder. But in this hour of victory he knew the fate that had overtaken his faithful follower, and, his heart filled with a grief that could not be comforted, he turned back to the beach. There casting off the moorings of his boat, he lay down in the bottom, and so drifted out into the unknown.

Bajikole.

Once there lived in Tongatabu a Samoan named Bajikole. Now Bajikole had beautiful yellow hair, and this had won for him the love of two female divinities, called Jiji and Fainga'a. But their affection went unrequited, for Bajikole was already wedded, and his heart clave to his wife. However, the advances of celestial suitors are not easily to be repulsed, and grievous were the trials of the faithful Bajikole at the hands of the divine seducers. Bootless were it for mortal to openly reject such lovers, and long and anxious were the musings of Bajikole as he

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devised plans of escape. And not without success did he plot the discomfiture of Jiji and Fainga'a, for once, seeing them approach to take him off, he proposed that he carry them. The offer was accepted, and the two goddesses got each into a basket which Bajikole slung on a pole across his shoulders, with strict injunctions to his passengers on no account to look down, but to keep their gaze fixed steadily on the sky. So he bore them off, up the mountain Holohibebe, where he hung up pole, baskets, and goddesses upon a buko tree. Bajikole then stole quietly away, and Jiji and Fainga'a, gazing ever at the sky and seeing there the movement of the clouds, were unaware that they themselves were stationary.

And so they remained for two whole years, but at the end of that time the baskets rotted, and the goddesses fell. Now, it happened just at this time that Bajikole's curiosity was aroused to learn the end of this episode of divinities in baskets. After admonitions from his wife to walk warily in his dealings with visitants from the other world, he set out for the mountain, and as he reached it met his contemned admirers coming down the slope. Unabashed, he expressed regret that for so long he had neglected his obligations to them, and, further, invited them to accompany him on a fishing expedition and see his prowess as an angler. But the crafty mortal had already devised another plot against his heavenly lovers. When the time came round for the fishing trip, he took with him a large basket made of cocoa-nut roots, wherein he had placed sweet-smelling wreaths and chaplets, such as the natives love to adorn themselves with. Thus prepared, he set out with the love-lorn maids. Bajikole sat in the stern to manage the boat, but Jiji and Fainga'a he placed in the bow, bidding them keep their eyes forward, and on no consideration to look round until he called them. When they had got well out to sea he dived over the stern, and, keeping up a great splashing the while, he invested himself with the ornaments and wreaths with which he had come prepared. Clambering back on board, he called his fair passengers to look round. Great was their astonishment at the transformation. To their inquiries Bajikole replied that festival was being held at the bottom of the sea, with all the customary sports and wealth of flowers, and that if Jiji and Fainga'a desired

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539 to go, all they had to do was to get into the big cocoa-nut root basket. Trustfully the maids of heaven crept into this aquatic carriage, which the provident Bajikole carefully weighted with stones. Then, with a heave and a splash, away they sailed to the bottom of the sea, whilst Bajikole returned to land. And at the bottom of the sea they would have remained had not the great god Tangaloa at length interposed on their behalf.

It is said that this irreverent conduct of Bajikole was responsible for both Niua and Samoa being long held in disfavour by the whole Polynesian pantheon.

REV. G. BROWN, D.D.

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000 THE BUR OR BOROUGH MAN.

(See Vol. xix. p. 379; and xx. 89, 227.)

The following letter from Professor F. W. Tilden of the University, Indiana, has been kindly sent by Sir James Frazer:

"On August 10th, 1911, I drove out from Edinburgh to the small town at the end of the Firth of Forth Bridge, and there saw a boy dressed entirely in a suit of burs, being led about by other youths, collecting pennies. I was told by a bystander that the custom had been observed there for four hundred years, and that originally the person was called the Borough Man, and later the Bur Man."

BETROTHAL CUSTOM IN NORTH WALES.

A correspondent of *Country Life* of 25th November, 1916, describes the door of a farm-house cupboard marked with the shape of a heart. At the base of the heart was a diamond-shaped figure. He was informed that recently at a betrothal party each guest was asked to bore a hole in the cupboard door, the number of holes representing the number of guests. The diamond-shaped figure represented hearts' blood, and it was made some time afterwards to show that one of the betrothed pair died before marriage. Further accounts of similar betrothal customs would be interesting.

W. CROOKE.